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April 30, 2001 LB 305, 543

teacher loan forgiveness?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, may I digress just a little, or do you want some...

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Um-hum, if it won't take you 60 seconds, because that's all the time I have left.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Oh, okay. Well, the short answer is I don't know because I'd like to hear more discussion on LB 305. I'm trying to get more discussion going on LB 305. I'm uncertain, Senator Chambers. I guess that's the short answer.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. I will give the time that I have to Senator Hilgert. (Laugh)

SENATOR CUDABACK: I'm sorry, Senator Hilgert, he didn't leave you much. Senator Thompson. Your time is up. (Laughter) Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Chambers raised the issue of whether we have the fish in the boat; whether we need this, this program. One of the reasons we have it set up for our teacher training institutions in Nebraska is to encourage people who are enrolled in college, and you don't become a member of the teacher training college until you meet certain criteria and it's different from school to school but, generally speaking, you're a junior or a senior; you have a certain grade point average and you begin taking teacher training courses. In 1990, the total number of schools in Nebraska, public and private, who had education...well, that's...let me rephrase that, who had education degrees as a percentage of the total number of students, in the public schools it was 19 percent in 1990; in 1999, it was only 16.3 percent--a downward trend. In the independents it stayed about the same, but overall we have fewer people going for education degrees than we did ten years ago. So this bill is to encourage people to look at teaching, to find a way to be able to financially swing it a little easier and especially those